

The Arkansas River has had a profound influence on The City of Wichita's growth and development. After all, Wichita was founded at the confluence of the Big and Little Arkansas Rivers. And, as the City of Wichita envisions development in the future, there are major economic initiatives that center around the River.

So, when we learn that there are advisories on fish consumption, and that the river is not clean enough for recreational activities, we should all be concerned, and we should all take responsibility for finding

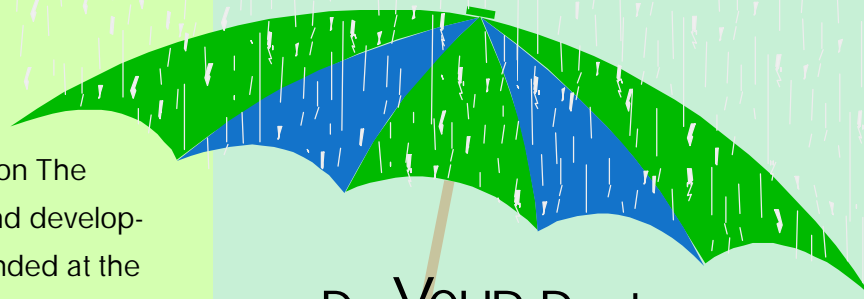
solutions.

One of the main threats to the quality of the river water is the run-off from farms,

suburban backyards and city streets.

Kansas storms shower the land, washing soil particles, animal waste, herbicides, and other materials into our waterways.

The good news is, YOU can help! There are many things you can be doing to improve the water quality of the Arkansas River.



Do YOUR Part

- 💧 Pick up after your pets.
- 💧 Use commercial car washes. They are more efficient and they have mud traps that catch oil and sediment.
- 💧 Keep your car tuned up so that it does not leak oil or antifreeze, nor does it burn oil that causes air pollution that in turn pollutes the rain.
- 💧 Follow the label directions on insecticides and herbicides very carefully. More is not always better.
- 💧 Use slow release fertilizers.
- 💧 Use natural alternatives to pesticides where possible.
- 💧 Pull weeds by hand as an alternative to using pesticides.
- 💧 Plant grass that is native to your area to reduce the need for fertilizer or pesticides.
- 💧 Use soil barriers when renovating the lawn. This keeps the soil from being washed away until the grass seed has germinated.
- 💧 Never apply fertilizer or pesticides if rain is predicted.

Protecting the Arkansas River



"A River is more
than an Amenity...
it is a Treasure."

-Oliver Wendell Holmes



Our River, Our Responsibility



Past

Despite recent reports of pollution in the Arkansas River, this community can rest assured that our river water quality has seen significant improvement over the past 30 years. That is because the regulations regarding discharge into the river have become much more stringent. In fact, it was only about 30 years ago that the first EPA water quality regulations were implemented. Prior to implementation of the Federal Clean Water Act in the early 70s, people were still dumping raw sewage and industrial discharge into the rivers! The City, however, has been treating its sewage since 1933.

The Clean Water Act has had a significant impact on the nation's waterways, including the Arkansas River. Major improvements have been made in sewer collection and treatment. In fact, the City of Wichita's wastewater treatment program has won many awards for meeting or exceeding the discharge standards set forth by the federal government.



Above: This picture was taken near the Douglas Street bridge in 1872, the same year the City of Wichita passed an ordinance to prohibit bathing in the Arkansas River. Right: Douglas Street Bridge, 2001

The Arkansas River Symposium
The first priority was to identify the sources of pollution. The City of Wichita has hired a consultant to locate potential sources and determine ways to mitigate the problem. The second priority was to develop and implement a public awareness campaign. In February 2001, the City launched the "Our River,

Present

"Our Responsibility" campaign as a way to get all citizens involved in doing their part to help keep potential pollutants out of the river.

Environmental Resolution A strategic plan for protecting the Arkansas River and other environmental resources has been adopted. The plan includes the following principles:

- Monitor and, when necessary, regulate businesses and activities that may impact the environmental conditions in the community
- Partner with the business community through pollution prevention programs
- Form coalitions with other communities that may be similarly affected by regional facilities and activities that could adversely affect the environment

Future

The stability and future growth and development of the City is vitally linked to the protection and enhancement of the Arkansas River. Therefore, the effort to keep our river clean will continue for many years to come. At this time, the goals for the future include:

- Developing a remediation plan for addressing problem areas.
- Expanding the scope of water quality improvement to include more area within the drainage basin.
- Developing and implementing more education programs
- Enhancing wastewater processes, regardless of the fact that the City already meets or exceeds regulatory requirements.

